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FEDERAL FARM BILL PROVIDES MUCH NEEDED FUNDING TO WARREN WATER DISTRICT

WARREN, MA - Federal, state and local officials gathered today at the Warren Water District as USDA Rural Development State Director David Tuttle presented a \$912,450 low interest loan and \$746,550 grant to the district on behalf of President George W. Bush and Secretary of Agriculture, Ann M. Veneman. The federal loan and grant has been made available to the Warren Water District through the enactment of 2002 Farm Bill and is being provided in order to make improvements to the towns' water distribution system. The Warren Water District received a \$138,500 low interest loan and \$88,500 grant earlier this year to fund the first phase of this six-phase project. The funding that was announced today will be used to fund phases two and three.

The 2002 Farm Bill, which was signed into law by President Bush on May 13, 2002, provided Rural Development with \$360 million nationally to fund water and wastewater projects. The Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal provision in the 2002 Farm Bill helps to make available the necessary resources to establish water and waste disposal facilities that are compliant with federal and state environmental standards. Funding for projects in the Towns of Barre and Winchendon were also announced today.

State Senator Stephen Brewer, State Representative Reed Hillman and a representative of Congressman Richard Neal joined Mr. Tuttle in presenting the Farm Bill funds. Water District members, Mitchell Cieslak, Jack O'Neill, and Francis Beaudry were also present along with Select Board members, Joe LaFlower, Michael Smith, and Marc Richards, as well as other local officials.

The Warren Water District was established in 1920 and therefore contains sections that are quite old. These older sections require upgrades and improvements which will allow future water demands to be met. "We at Rural Development are committed to funding projects that protect and improve the capacity and quality of rural water sources," said State Director Tuttle. "Thanks to the 2002 Farm Bill, we have been able to accelerate our commitment to the Warren Water District and the residents that they serve."

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"Farm Bill funds provide important assistance to rural towns, such as Warren, who face the problem of providing clean, safe water with limited funds," said Senator Brewer. "I commend the Town of Warren for putting together a competitive application that is well-deserved of funding."

Representative Reed V. Hillman (R–Sturbridge) said, "This is great news for the town of Warren and I could not be more pleased for the community. In these times of economic uncertainty it is a tremendous accomplishment to see such a significant amount of money go back to the community. I applaud the Bush Administration for their support for these projects, which help protect and preserve our environment."

More information on the 2002 Farm Bill and its provisions are available at: <http://www.usda.gov/farmbill>

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